

Proof-packaging error — Real find or fake?

By Roger Boye

THE FOLLOWING ARE answers to questions received in the last few weeks.

Q—It took 11 months for the United States Mint to send me my five 1976 proof sets, but I guess the wait was worth it. In one of the sets, there are two quarters and no half-dollar. Is this unique? Is my set rare?—A.J., Chicago.

A—Packaging errors in proof and uncirculated sets are unusual, but not unheard of. The

value of your proof set probably is increased somewhat, assuming you could find a buyer who has an interest in this kind of error.

One problem for a collector of such errors is the possibility of fakes. It is not too difficult to slice open a proof set package, switch coins, and reseal the package. An expert examination is needed to detect such a forgery from a genuine packaging error.

Q—I saw an article in one of the Chicago papers about paper money. I have a \$5 bill

[series 1950-B] that doesn't have "In God We Trust" on the back. How come they didn't put it on my bill? — J. C., Wilton Junction, Ia.

A—The Treasury Department decided to add the motto "In God We Trust" to U.S. currency in the mid-1950s. The exact year in which the motto was added varies with the denomination and the type of bill.

On \$5 Federal Reserve notes, the motto was added with the 1963 series. No series 1950-B \$5 Federal Reserve notes carry the motto.